REMARKS

The continued thorough examination of the present application evidenced by the Final Office Action of October 21, 2010 (the Final Office Action) is appreciated. Assignee particularly appreciates the detailed response to arguments provided at page 2 of the Office Action. Assignee has canceled Claims 1-22 and presented new Claims 23-36 including new independent Claims 23 and 30. New Claims 23 and 30 recite as follows:

23. A system for providing email communications, comprising:

an internet service provider server configured to provide internet services to a remote computer system;

wherein the internet service provider server is configured to receive an email text message from the remote computer system, configured to examine the email text message to determine if a user of the remote computer system has requested the internet service provider server to protect the email text message from subsequent alteration, configured to protect the e-mail text message against subsequent alteration by at least one recipient thereof by converting a format of text in the body of the e-mail text message from a text format to a picture format protected against subsequent alterations, and configured to send the e-mail text message to the at least one recipient after conversion of the format of the text from the text format to the picture format protected against subsequent alterations.

30. A method of providing email services, comprising:

receiving an email text message at an internet service provider server from a remote computer system, the email message addressed to a recipient email address;

examining the email text message at the internet service provider server to determine if a user of the remote computer system has requested the internet service provider server to protect the email text message from subsequent alteration;

protecting the e-mail text message against subsequent alteration by at least one recipient thereof by converting a format of text in the body of the e-mail text message at the internet service provider server from a text format to a picture format protected against subsequent alterations; and

sending the e-mail text message from the internet service provider server to the at least one recipient after conversion of the format of the text from the text format to the picture format protected against subsequent alterations.

Claim 23 is submitted to be patentable over the cited U.S. Publication No. 2003/0037261 to Meffert and EP 10169672 to Nagai, as Meffert and Nagai do not, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest an internet service provider server configured to an internet service provider server configured to receive an email text message from a remote computer system, to examine the email text message to determine if a user of the remote computer system has requested the internet service provider server to protect the email text message from subsequent alteration, to protect the e-mail text message against subsequent alteration by at least one recipient thereof by converting a format of text in the body of the e-mail text message from a text format to a picture format protected against subsequent alterations, and to send the e-mail text message to the at least one recipient after conversion of the format of the text from the text format to the picture format protected against subsequent alterations.

In contrast, in the system of Meffert, email encryption is performed by a local agent 130 within the electronic device 100 that generates an email message:

> Then, instead of clicking on the traditional "send" button provided by LOTUS NOTES, the use preferably clicks a specialized button, provided by the present invention via the InstallScripts.exe module, thereby launching the PKI-base encryption services. At this point local agent 130 saves the email message to the LOTUS NOTES database and launches a login procedure to control server 200. The user is then prompted for and then enters authentication information (e.g., a passphrase or biometric identification) and the memo (email message) is encrypted using PKI cryptography. **That is, the email and/or any attachments is encrypted using CAST-128 and optionally signed using a certificate based SHA-1 signed MD5 hash value to create a "package". This package is then transmitted to control server 200 via HTTP or FTP, preferably using an SSL connection.**

Meffert, para. 0083 (emphasis added). Similarly, in Nagai, conversion of text data into graphic data is performed at the client. See Nagai, Abstract ("The client C converts the text and/or graphic data input by a user into image data in the BMP format to compose an anonymous mail containing the image data."). Accordingly, these references do not disclose or suggest the recitations of Claim 23, alone or in combination.

Claim 30 is patentable for at least similar reasons as Claim 23. The dependent claims are patentable at least based on their dependence from a patentable independent claim.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, Assignee respectfully submits that the above-entitled application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned representative at the telephone number indicated below to discuss any outstanding issues relating to the allowability of the application. Respectfully submitted,

David C. Hall
Registration No.: 38,904

USPTO Customer No. 39072
Myers Bigel Sibley & Sajovec
Post Office Box 37428
Raleigh, North Carolina 27627
Telephone: 919/854-1400
Facsimile: 919/854-1401